(b) Petrol has not been imported during the current financial year. Per litre cost of petrol to the consumer ex-storage point excluding local taxes and levies etc. is Rs. 13.42 p which includes a marketing margin of paise 12.6. On 1.4-1985 (the commencement of VII Plan) the per litre cost of petrol to consumer ex-storage point was Rs. 6.37/litre including a marketing margin of about paise 6.2.

(c) and (d) Handling loss is on account of movement and storage of product. Factors leading to the losses are identified and continuous efforts are made to control the same.

Gulf Surcharge

310. SHRl S S. AHLUWALIA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had imposed "Gulf-Surcharge" on the selling prices of Petroleum products viz Aviation Fuel, Petrol and Diesel, to recover unforeseen rise in the cost of imported crude oil prevailed during the period of Gulf-crisis in 1991;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the situation became normal long ago and crude prices in the international market registered stability and much downward level as compared to that existed in the wake of crisis in the Gulf; if so, its comparative details;

(c) whether the same has resulted in reduction of cost of import of crude oil by Government; and

(d) if so, whether Government should not do away with the "Gulf-Surcharge" from the selling price of Petroleum products with the fulfilment of the specific purpose for which it has been imposed ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) to (d) Gulf Surcharge on petroleum products was levied with effect from 15th October, 1990 to partially compensate the oil industry for the increase in the costs due to rise in international prices and other factors. Even though the prices have come down in the international market since then, there has been additional burden on the oil industry on account of adjustments in the exchange rate of rupee and other factors due to which the existing prices of petroleum products do not recover the full costs. Therefore, there is no proposal at present to do away with this Surcharge.

Privatisation of Various Sectors

311. MAULANA OBAIDULLAH KHAN AZMI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration for bringing about privatisation in various sectors under the control of his Ministry; and

(b) If so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) and (b) Private Sector participation to a certain extent already exists in exploration, refining and marketing activities of the petroleum sector.

Private Companies in Oil Refineries -

312. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that private companies have been allowed to enter in oil refineries; and

(b) if so, what are the details and guidelines thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) and (b) A 3 MTPA capacity refinery at Mangalore is being set up as a joint venture between HPCL and Indian Rayon Industries Ltd. While some other companies in the private sector have also shown interest in setting up/participating in new relneries, no decision has been taken in this regard.